



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

April 21, 2008

Reply To
Attn Of: ETPA-088

Ref: 03-040-AFS

Lawrence A. Timchak, Forest Supervisor
Caribou-Targhee National Forest
1405 Hollipark Drive
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Dear Mr. Timchak:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the **Aspen Range Timber Sale** (CEQ No. 20080100) in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. Section 309, independent of NEPA, specifically directs EPA to review and comment in writing on the environmental impacts associated with all major federal actions and the document's adequacy in meeting NEPA requirements.

The draft EIS documents the analysis for the proposed Aspen Range Timber Sale in the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Proposed actions include mechanical timber harvest, prescribed fire and transportation improvements within a 12,000 acre project area. The proposed actions would change tree species composition, density and structure in an effort to release aspen from competing conifers and convert back to early seral species and reduce undesirable wildfire conditions.

We appreciate the efforts you and your staff have taken to address the comments concerns we expressed in our letter on the draft EIS. In particular, we appreciate that this version of the final EIS includes an alternative (Alternative 5, Preferred Alternative) which proposes to remove additional miles of road from riparian areas through realignment. In addition, this alternative will comply with Revised Forest Plan standards and guidelines including Goshawk Habitat. We support the Forest Service's efforts to meet the proposed project Purpose and Need and avoid potential environmental impacts.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this final EIS. If you would like to discuss these comments in detail, please contact Mike Letourneau at (206) 553-6382 or myself at (206) 553-1601.

Sincerely,

/s/

Christine Reichgott, Manager
NEPA Review Unit